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AUTHOR Nytell, Ulf
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ABSTRACT

Management and leadership as a consequence of organizational tasks and structure are discussed in this paper, with a focus on the application of leadership theories from market-oriented organizations to more regulated organizations such as the Swedish school system. The Swedish educational system, according to Berg's (1988) "cross model," is characterized by a nonmarket orientation and decentralization. The Lots leadership development strategy of a market-oriented organization is then applied to the public school, or nonmarket, organization. Characteristics of a market- versus public-oriented organization include: supply and demand versus tasks set by a governing body; explicit versus unclear, complex goals; customer's free choice versus students' free choice; and civil versus public law. The Lots plan is pupil- but not curriculum-centered; offers strategies for change but not development; and improves leadership but not the management function. A conclusion is that the Lots method is useful in situations that are not tightly controlled by a governing body. A recommendation is that principals must understand the governing body's goals and their consequences for school management. Leader competence is based on school orientation and structure. Five specific recommendations for improving principal effectiveness are offered. Two figures and one table are included. (12 references) (LMI)

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"The School Principal in Sweden: A Boss or a Leader? - Implications for the Competence of School Principals"

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Ulf Nytell
Department of Education
Uppsala University, Sweden

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Introduction

Management researchers, consultants, managers etc., have in recent years, more and more frequently emphasized the importance of leadership to the success of an organization. A recurring component, in this context, is the leader's and/or the manager's vital task to stimulate and contribute to making the organization's operations goal oriented and to ensure that these goals are put into operation. It has often been market oriented, well known organizations such as IBM, McDonalds and Volvo that have supplied the practical basis for the conclusions that, in different ways, have been drawn. One question dealt with in this paper is *the suitability of transferring competence from market oriented organizations to more regulated organizations such as the Swedish school system.*

Working from research into the school as an organization (Berg et al, 1988 and Berg & Nyttell, 1989) together with research into the working conditions of school principals in Sweden (Nyttell, 1990), this paper deals with management and leadership as a consequence of the tasks and form of the organization.

Different types of organizations require different types of leadership. A market oriented organization, for example, is ultimately governed by the market and its survival depends upon adapting its operations swiftly and efficiently. The Swedish school system, on the other hand, is a non-market oriented organization, ultimately governed by the state. This fact has major implications on the development of leadership amongst Swedish school principals.

Presentation

By way of introduction, a brief description is given of the type of organization represented by the Swedish school. By presenting a classification scheme for organizational analysis, the implications on leadership in Swedish schools is described. Working from the classification scheme and an evaluation study of a school management course in Sweden,

the characteristics of market oriented organizations and the public school system in Sweden is discussed in some detail.

Finally, conclusions are drawn as to the type of competence that should characterize the Swedish school principal. In this context, a connection is also made to the problem, due to altered control, for an "OD cadre" in Oregon.

What type of organization is the Swedish school?

The Swedish school is a social establishment with certain tasks that emanate from the governing body (in Educational Research, sometimes referred to as the "Mandator")¹. The governing body of the compulsory school system in Sweden is ultimately the state. As governing body, the state has formal control and governs the school in different ways. This means that the school is a non-market oriented organization.

The form of control of the school was previously of a centralized character. The state formulated rules regarding the local operations of the school. On the other hand, the goals were wider. In recent years, the state has, to a certain degree, reduced this system of direct control, by replacing certain detailed rules with "guidelines". Such a change in the control system offers local municipalities and other different interest groups in society more scope for influence.

What kind of leadership is relevant to an organization such as the Swedish school?

To answer this question we shall make a connection to a classification scheme for organizational analysis developed at the Department of Education, Uppsala University by Berg (1988). By using this classification scheme, known as the "Cross Model" it is possible to classify organizations, both in terms of the tasks they perform and the form of the organization. In graphic form, the Cross Model looks like this:

¹ It should be pointed out that Sweden has a state school system with a national curriculum

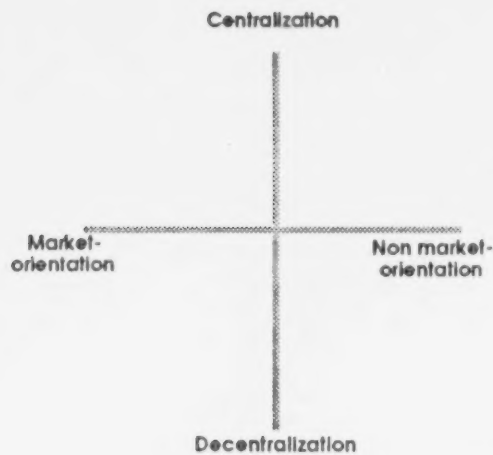


Figure 1. The Cross Model (Berg, 1988 p.1)

The horizontal control structure of the Cross Model expresses the nature of the fundamental tasks an organization performs or will perform. The vertical control structure is an expression of how the organization discharges these task.

Through practical studies of the control structures of different organizations it becomes possible to place the organization in the above classification scheme. The question then becomes: "Where should the Swedish school system be placed in this classification scheme?"

The Swedish School system has been one of the most centralized in the world. As previously mentioned, in recent years the state has, to a certain degree, reduced this system of direct control by replacing certain detailed rules with "guidelines". Such a change in the control system gives local municipalities and other different interest groups within society a greater scope for influence (see Berg & Nyttell, 1991). The more guidelines introduced the greater the degree of decentralization in the school system. This means that we can place the Swedish school system in the Cross Model, in the following way:

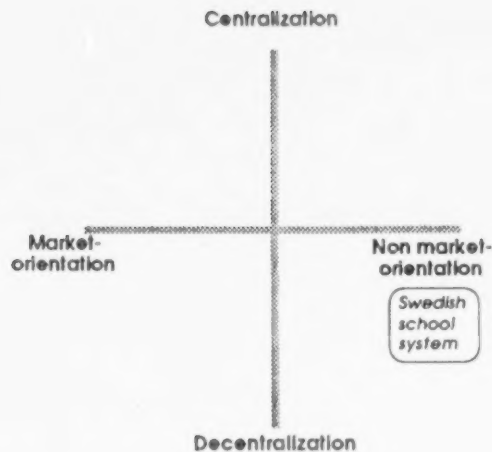


Figure 2. The Swedish school system in the Cross Model.

Merely placing the school system in the above model has, of course, no value in itself. However, the placement can be used to advantage, to discuss different possible leadership strategies.

Berg (1988), points out that the traditional boss is most likely to be found within the more centralized organizations, whilst a decentralized organization presupposes more of an idea of "leadership". By "boss", Berg refers to a person who has the formal power within an organization to make decisions that affect other members of the organization. The boss must be able to solve virtually all problems that arise within an organization. Carlzon (1987) states that "the traditional boss governs by instructions, that is to say, rules regarding what one must not do. Instruction is mainly the knowledge of limitations. The more instruction, the less individual responsibility and scope for individual initiative" (p. 23). A leader is a person who makes strategic policy decisions and who creates the best possible conditions to establish an operation that can implement those decisions. Carlzon also points out that "Leadership means...to analyse the whole, develop a business concept, state goals and strategies, create an organization and delegate responsibilities in such a way that the goals and strategies can be realized" (p.23).

These arguments imply that "leadership" should be the hallmark of the Swedish school principal. The reason being, as illustrated above, that the Swedish school has moved towards a greater degree of decentralization. On the other hand, the Swedish school is not, fundamentally, market oriented - quite the contrary, it is non-market oriented. As mentioned in the introduction, the school system in Sweden is a social establishment with certain tasks that emanate from its governing body. This means that it is by no means a foregone conclusion that this type of leadership development strategy, relevant to a market oriented organization, is also relevant in the Swedish school system.

In order to more closely illustrate this, I will show the results of an evaluation study of a school leadership course in Sweden, based on a leadership development strategy successfully used within market oriented organizations.

To super-impose a leadership development strategy from a market oriented organization onto a non-market oriented organization

In recent years, it has become increasingly common in Sweden for organizations within the public sector to adopt leadership and competence development strategies etc., from industry. The Lots method, which was originally developed within the market oriented pharmaceutical company, Pharmacia, in Sweden, is one such example. The method has been used a great deal in industry and in recent years, also within the public sector. The Lots method has now also been tested for leadership development within the public school system. To what degree the Lots method, used for school leadership development, can contribute to developing the operations of the school will also be discussed. The questions dealt with are:

1. What is Lots?
2. What characterizes market oriented organizations and what characterizes the public school system in Sweden?
3. Does Lots offer the type of expertise/knowledge that is relevant to school managers for the development of school operations?

What is Lots?

In order to have a clear picture of the direction of the Lots method, the basic concepts and trains of thought of the method are described from the Lots documentation.

Goal oriented operation

In its own words, the Lots method can be described as "The manager's tool for planning, delegating and following up" (from the Lots documentation). By discussing and establishing the aims, goals, strategies, etc., of the operation within the organization and then linking this to different types of activities, personnel and organization an attempt is made to create a goal oriented operation.

The customer - the foundation of the operation

In order to achieve a goal oriented operation it is, first and foremost, essential to identify the organization's customer. The following key questions must therefore be asked within Lots:

- "- Who is the our customer?
- What is the customer's situation?
- What can we do to solve the customer's situation?
- What decision criteria do the customer and interested parties have?
- What will we achieve in the long term with our operation?" (Lots)

The importance of always starting from the customer and the customer's problems or situation is stressed on several occasions. It is also important to differentiate between the organization's customers and its interested parties. Interested parties can never be the "raison d'etre" for carrying on an operation rather than being "...share holders, personnel, local authorities, the state, suppliers and so on" (Lots).

Aims and strategy

The aim, according to Lots, is "the relationship between our customer, his situation and what we should do to solve this situation". The aim is determined in order to, working from the customer's shortcomings and requirements, take the correct action and is put into practice by "...living in our immediate environment and by determining the type of operation we run" (Lots).

Strategy is defined as "...that characteristic we choose in order to be successful". The starting point for this is that our own customers and interested parties always have other options available and can turn to other suppliers or choose a completely different method of solving their problem. The customer and interested parties establish decision criteria which must then be lived up to.

The strategies should be established by us living in our immediate environment, analysing the customer's and interested parties' decision criteria, their available options, etc. The strategies must then be communicated and actively processed within our own organization.

What characterizes market oriented organizations and what characterizes the public school system in Sweden?

In order to be able to discuss how the Lots method can be superimposed on a public sector organization, such as the school, the table below summarizes some of the basic criteria for market oriented organizations and public sector organizations, in this case the school. Some of the criteria are dealt with in more detail at a later stage in this paper.

Table 1. Some operational criteria for market oriented organizations and public sector organizations (the school).

	Market Oriented Organizations	Public Sector Organizations
Operational foundation	Market and customer	Tasks set by the governing body
Ultimate efficiency criteria	Satisfy the market and the customer to achieve profitability	The governing body's intentions
Object	Customer	Pupil
Controlling organ	The market	The executive
Jurisdiction	Civil Law	Public Law ²
Goal	Clarity Ability to be: Measured Communicated Quantified Formulated in economic terms Achievable	Unclear Lack of internal unity Limited ability to be quantified Complex Directional
Goal determination process	"Living in the immediate environment"	Curriculum studies and interpretations
The object's relationship to the organization	Free choice	Structural and/or substantial compulsion

²This is as type of law that regulates the public sector.

Supply and demand versus tasks laid down by the governing body

A perhaps obvious, but nevertheless essential comment in this context, is that a profit steered company is controlled by its market. In order to survive, the company must rapidly comprehend the signals from the market, showing different alterations and then attempt to adapt its operations accordingly. Ultimately, it is also the law of supply and demand that steers a market oriented organization. A public sector organization's existence does not stand or fall to the same extent on the degree to which it has succeeded in this process of adapting. Fundamentally, the operations are more dependent on the tasks formulated by the organization's governing body.

It should be pointed out that, in practice, completely market steered and/or completely public organizations scarcely exist. The difference between market oriented and public organizations is, therefore, not absolute but relative.

Clearly defined goals, capable of being quantified versus unclear, complex goals

In the Lots documentation, goals are defined and described as "...a situation/position we wish to attain at a certain point in time. The goal must be realistic, capable of being measured and communicated". According to Lots, the goal, can be summarized as:

- An attainable position
- Realistic
- Capable of being measured
- Capable of being communicated
- Capable of being quantified
- Formulated in economic terms

A common characteristic of public sector organizations and one dealt with by many organizational researchers, is the complex goal structure and limited possibility for the evaluation of results. Targets or goals in public sector

organizations are characterized, according to political scientist, Hagström (1988), for example, by:

- lack of clarity
- lack of internal unity
- capable of being quantified to a limited degree only

Hagström further points out that this type of goal "...is characteristic of many public sector organizations and forms an important frame condition for public leadership" (a.a. p. 30). Even if it is possible to define certain goals in concrete terms, it is most frequently only capable of being partially quantified. Neither can the goals of public sector organizations always be stated as terminal behaviour (i.e. as a final aim [station]) rather than as directional pointers.

The goals that exist within the curriculum for both Compulsory Schools and Upper Secondary Schools are of a comprehensive nature and show a direction and intention for the school. Of the above key words, taken from Lots, it is only the "state/position" that corresponds to the type of goal formulated by the curriculum. In the meantime, the goal of the curriculum must be interpreted and put into operation at different levels. The key words "capable of being communicated" then also become relevant.

There are obvious risks involved in stating that goals, within the school system and within public sector organizations generally, should be capable of being quantified and formulated in economic terms. The risk is, namely, that the operation becomes directed towards and gives priority to those activities that correspond to this key phrase, i.e. capable of being measured, capable of being quantified and operations that can be formulated in economic terms. The disadvantage of this is that too little effort will be concentrated on more complex and more qualitatively biased operations that are not capable of being quantified or measured and are not capable of being formulated in economic terms. On the other hand, within market oriented organizations it is important to direct operations mainly towards such activities, which, in the long run will be profitable and are thereby "...capable of being quantified, measured and are possible to formulate in economic terms..". In other

words, the Lots methodology can mean that the operation is directed towards other goals than the organization's primary aims.

Of course, even within market oriented organizations, qualitative goals also occur. It is not, though, this type of goal that forms the basis of the operation (in Lots' terms, the aim of the operation). Instead, it can be regarded more as a means, for example, a business concept relating to quality, to, in the long term, achieve quantitative goals, i.e. profitability. On the other hand, the qualitative goals in a public sector organization are often the very reason for the fundamental existence of the organization and thereby form the starting point of the operation.

The customer's free versus the student's limited choice

Buchanan (1975) states that the characteristic of the market is that all actions are voluntary and mutual and that no action takes place without the parties involved being in agreement:

"A situation is judged 'good' to the extent that it allows individuals to get what they want to get, whatsoever this might be, limited only by the principle of mutual agreement" (ibid p. 2).

The choices and alternatives available to students, by comparison to customers within a market oriented organization are extremely limited. Students within a compulsory school have virtually no choices or alternatives, but finding themselves, in principle, in a compulsory situation. The law relating to compulsory school attendance is an expression of this (so called structural compulsion). Students attending Upper Secondary Schools have somewhat greater choices and alternatives. However, by comparison to a customer, an Upper Secondary School pupil has very few choices. The choices are greatest with the selection of educational course. Thereafter, they are visibly limited, for example, in relation to length of the course, attendance, grades, teachers, premises etc., (so called substantial compulsion). This limitation of choice makes the motives presented in Lots to develop strategies etc., irrelevant to a public sector organization such as a school. The conclusion of this reasoning is that the customer concept can not

be applied to a pupil's relationship to the school. Pupils are members of the school organization rather than customers of it.

Civil Law versus Public Law

As mentioned, both Compulsory School and Senior Secondary Schools are, fundamentally, public and regulated organizations. This regulation is principally in the form of a document that shows a political intention for the school. This is mainly documented in the curriculum. The control (the jurisdiction) of the school is, therefore formulated by Public Law. On the other hand, the jurisdiction of a market oriented organization is formulated by Civil Law. Within this, agreements, contracts etc., can replace current legal rules. In reality, this means that market forces form the main source of control for these organizations.

In the study that forms the basis of this evaluation, the Lots leadership did not allow the observation of the training that an evaluation should entail. This means that as an evaluator, I was neither allowed to take part in the actual training process or allowed access to the current course documentation. The question of observation is an important principle as it is closely connected to the question of the suitability of transferring and super-imposing a training course that is designed for and utilized within organizations controlled by Civil Law to organizations controlled by Public Laws, such as the school. This observation, advocated within public sector organizations, is impeded if the training an employee receives within a public sector organization cannot be subjected to scrutiny through reliable evaluation. This is particularly remarkable, if it does not take place because course participants do not wish it, rather than it being the wish of the leadership of the private, market oriented company giving the training. Had this refusal to be allowed access to the training process and/or the course documentation been in conjunction with management development training within a private, market oriented company it would have not been so remarkable. In this type of organization the demands for public awareness do not exist to the same extent as within public sector organizations. One reason for the difference is that the foundation of a public sector organization is a public interest whilst the basis of private, market oriented organizations is more one of self-interest (Lewin,

1988). On the other hand, within the "Public choice school", for example, it is suggested that even public sector organizations are steered by a self interest and that "...all behaviour is self-interested ...abolishing self interest is fruitless" (ibid p. 132). Even if there is, as the "Public choice school" purports, such self interest within the actual organization, the principle goal of the public school system is public interest. This makes it somewhat suspect if the means - in this case leadership development strategies - are not accessible for observation and thereby capable of being scrutinized by evaluation.

After this, where I have briefly dealt with the basic values that the Lots method is built upon and the characteristics of market oriented and public sector organizations, I will now move on to discuss Lots as a strategy for school management training.

Does Lots offer the type of knowledge/expertise that is relevant to school managers for the development of school operations?

Lots - the pupil in the centre, but not the curriculum

Within market oriented organizations it is, for reasons of competition and survival, essential to always take the requirements of the market and the customer as the starting point of the operation. This is also, as seen above, a fundamental starting point within Lots. It is the customer's requirements and shortcomings that determine the starting point of the operation. It is, therefore, essential to identify the customer and to subsequently always use his situation as the starting point for the operation. In market oriented organizations, it is the customer that is the "...objective of the operation", whilst in the more public organization it is the governing body's intentions that form the "...objectives of the operation". As a consequence of this, the starting point must entail a more comprehensive operational planning (which is what Lots is about) within the school, which is a public sector organization, formed by the goals that the governing body has determined for the school.

The fact that school operations emanate from the governing body's goals does not mean, of course, that the pupils are thereby ignored. A parallel can be drawn here with John Dewey who is often associated with the expression "the pupil in the centre". As can be seen, for example, from Dewey's "The Child and the Curriculum" (1902), Dewey states that it is the pupil, together with the curriculum, that should form the starting point for teaching.

By exaggerating the focus on pupils and regarding them as customers, the basis of the operation is limited and over-simplified, which can lead to incorrect conclusions being drawn for the direction of the operation. Instead, the operational planning must - even if it becomes more complicated - take account of and analyse the complexity that forms the foundation for the school.

Lots - strategy for change but not development strategy

School development entails a development of the school's operations so that they correspond more closely to the tasks of the school (Wallin & Berg, 1983). It is, therefore, a question of a particular operational direction. On the other hand, a change of the school operation does not necessarily entail a change in any particular direction. Against the background of what is dealt with in this article, Lots is more of a strategy for change than a development strategy. This means that the direction of the operation does not emanate from the governing body's intentions rather than emanating from other criteria.

Lots - improves leadership but not the management function

Without doubt, Lots can contribute to improving leadership in schools in different ways. However, this does not automatically mean a development of the management function. The former concept focuses more on the qualities and characteristics of the manager. The latter, on the other hand, is linked to the manager's task to lead an operation in accordance with the tasks of the operation.

Conclusions and summary

By way of summary, we can finally say that within public sector organizations, such as the school, it is somewhat suspect to use the type of management development strategy exemplified by Lots. However, one advantage of Lots is that it is a relatively simple and manageable method of working with goals. In Sweden in recent years, demands have increasingly been made of management personnel within decentralized organizations to work with goal-related questions. However, they have not always, to the same degree, received the training and gained the necessary expertise to be able to cope with this. To a great extent, Lots offers the necessary expertise. In addition, the Lots method is relatively easy to use, amongst other things, by virtue of the fact that it simplifies and reduces the basis of the operation. This can perhaps be understood as positive for those who lead what is, in reality, a complex and fundamentally contradictory operation.

The disadvantage of the Lots method, as with other management development methods from market oriented organizations, is though, that it is frequently not based on the governing body's complex goals and intentions for the operation. A parallel can be drawn here with the type of problem that Berg (1984) deals with when an "OD cadre" in Oregon, for reasons of altered control from the governing body, had difficulties with its operational direction. The current "OD cadre" is described as follows:

"The cadre can be characterized as a service organization whose job is to increase the efficiency of the sub-systems of schools with a view to improving the schools' self renewing capability. What constitutes inefficiency, or to put it in different terms, what constitutes the "problems" is defined "inside" the client schools themselves. The peer-consultant thus operates on terms laid down by the school in question itself, terms influenced to a greater or lesser extent by pressure from its environment" (ibid p. 56).

However, in 1983, a district curriculum, known as "Middle School Guidelines" was adopted by the school board and changed the control structure of the community's education system. Amongst other things, these guidelines intended to ease the transition from elementary school, where the

teaching of each class is mainly the responsibility of one teacher, to junior high school with its subject teacher system. "...To make the transition as smooth as possible, it is, according to the guidelines, necessary for teachers to cooperate more closely between and within the two types of school" (ibid p.57). The introduction of middle school guidelines entails a new control strategy in the education system. Control over schools is, following the adoption of these guidelines, no longer the internal concern of the schools and their immediate environments. Criteria for deciding what school activities are acceptable have moved ultimately, to the school board: "...In other words, problems in schools cannot mainly be defined in terms of interaction between school and neighbourhood (market), but in terms of discrepancy between the aims embodied in the curriculum (i.e., those of the mandator of the school system) and actual day-to-day school activities" (ibid p.59).

When the control structure changed from market control to control dominated more by the governing body of the school system, the usefulness of the OD cadre of this kind decreased. Instead, another type of school consultant was needed. A type that concentrated more on reducing the gap between school reality and curriculum aims. In the same way that this type of consultant must start from the governing body's goals for the operation, the Swedish school principal must have a basis of knowledge that emanates from the governing body's intentions for the operation.

The Competence of the Swedish School Principal

The principal is ultimately responsible to ensure that the operation is loyal to the governing body. The control system mainly consists of guidelines. These are often unclear and ambiguous intentions. The principal must therefore be able to interpret the governing body's unclear intentions and put them into concrete form. The school principal must also have the ability to encourage and support actions within a range of operations, ultimately limited by the governing body's intentions.

This means that principals in Swedish schools must have a competence that is based on specifics for the school, i.e., the school is a non-market oriented

organization, characterized by abstract, comprehensive goals and which has an organizational form that is, at least in part, decentralized. Principals must have this knowledge and be aware of the consequences it has on the management of the school's operations. This means, for example, that the competence that should characterize principals must consist of:

- knowledge of the ultimate sources of control, principally the governing body's intentions affecting the school
- knowledge of the inner sources of control that affect the school, for example, the school's working organization, traditions, school culture, etc.
- the ability to interpret comprehensive, unclear goals
- the ability to transform the goals into concrete form, operational plans etc.
- the ability to encourage and support school operations that correspond with the governing body's intentions
- initiate evaluation work based on the actual goal

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